





PROPOSED BUILDING FOR THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
*Supplementary to THE ELDER MONTHLY*

# The Elder Monthly

THOMAS L. ELDER, *Editor*

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## Table of Contents

	<i>Pages</i>
EDITORIALS .....	1 to 5
A COMMENT ON THE COINS OF THE UNITED STATES, By <i>Charles J. Connick</i> .....	5 " 8
THE COLLECTOR'S DEBT TO THE MUSEUM, By <i>W. K. Moore-</i> <i>head</i> .....	8 " 11
NOTABLES WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH NUMISMATIC SOCIETY .....	11
THE CHICAGO NUMISMATIC SOCIETY .....	12
ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS WORTH OF PRIZES .....	13 " 14
THE NUMISMATIC AND ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF MONTREAL STAMP DEPARTMENT, By <i>C. Abbott Davis</i> .....	15 " 16
MINERALOGY, By <i>Forest Gaines</i> .....	16 " 17
CHARLES GREGORY'S GIFT .....	17
ADVERTISING .....	18 " 20

## Editorials

A current rumor has it that we are to have new designs made for our own coins, and that the gold coinage, the least useful, will be the first to be redesigned. While the present coinage may be mechanically and commercially perfect, it falls below the English and French types in point of artistic merit. In fact, it barely excels the work on coins of Kamehameha, king of Hawaii, while it is vastly inferior to the coinage of Menelik, Negus of Abyssinia.

The Philadelphia mint will, at an early date, begin the coinage of 400,000 ten peso gold coins for the Mexican government. These, with several orders from other South American countries, executed in the past, attest the good reputation of the mechanical work at the mint.

Advanced copies, for limited distribution, of the report of the director of the Philadelphia mint are now out. The report maintains the high standard set in previous reports by Director Roberts. A new feature is the report on the numismatic collection in the mint cabinet. This is the first report making direct reference to the mint collection and takes the form of a condensed monograph on the "utility of a cabinet of coins."

The new Denver mint will be put in operation in a very few months, turning out coins bearing the D mint-mark. Collectors, do not get your Dahlongas mixed with the Denverites.

Extensive additions have just been made to the Polish and Russian series in the Philadelphia mint cabinet. The new accessions render the two series almost continuous throughout, but not complete in each reign. The Polish collection now includes one of the rare thalers of John Casimir. The completion of the very instructive Russian series was desirable. A small beginning has also been made toward a collection of coins of the fourth Crusade.

That Numismatics is not a dead issue in America is evidenced by the activity at present among the different societies here and in Canada. The New York Society, thanks to Mr. Huntington and several other generous persons, is to have a \$47,000 home—the finest of its kind in the world—and over 1,500 specimens have been donated to its cabinets in the last year. The American Numismatic Association is very much alive, and equally so is the new Chicago Society. The latest addition to the collecting ranks is the Columbus Numismatic Society, with R. T. King as president, H. E. Buck vice-president, A. B. Coover curator and librarian, and Dr. J. M. Henderson secretary and treasurer. Good for Ohio! We can see how this youngster may attain a healthy growth. Ohio is a hotbed of collectors. We hear of a flourishing Society in Montreal, and news of these collecting bodies will be printed in the MONTHLY.

The American Numismatic and Archæological Society of New York held its annual meeting on the evening of January 15th, last, with a large attendance. Archer M. Huntington and most of the officers of last year were re-elected. The Society is in prosperous condition, with many recent acquisitions to its cabinets, the most important being

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gifts from Daniel Parrish, Jr., and Charles Gregory. Huntington has donated two fine pieces of property for a building site. The Society is fortunate in having such a generous and progressive man as Mr. Huntington for its president.

Any of our readers who fear that the MONTHLY may share the untimely fate of most of its predecessors and are reluctant about sending in their subscriptions on this account, may become subscribers, deferring payment until the end of the present year.

Many good things are in store for our readers. Historical, mineralogical and other good articles, as well as much news of the different Societies, has been crowded out of this issue through lack of space. Professor Moorehead promises a fine illustrated article in the near future. We hope to enlarge the MONTHLY in a short time.

Read our advertisements. Our advertisers are reliable and will do just as they say. A strict censorship will be observed, and all questionable classes of advertising and all doubtful individuals will be debarred.

### Popular Fallacies About Coins.

Whether the matter be directly chargeable to the newspapers or not, the writer has seldom read a press report bearing on the subject of coins which has not been more or less erroneous. A recent long article dated Washington, D. C., informs us that a "twenty-cent piece of 1877 or 1878, bearing the mint-mark C. C. commands a premium of from \$10 to \$15." Have any of our readers noted such mint-marks in their collections of twenty-cent pieces? "The dime of 1894, made in San Francisco," the article continues, "with the letter S, is worth from \$5 to \$10." \$50 to \$100 would be nearer the mark. This article gives as the reason for the record price of "\$5.50" realized for the 1904 Philadelphia mint dollar the fact that "all 1904 dollars were struck in proof sets," whereas there were millions coined in 1904 which were not in proof sets. The editor appreciates the compliment of the Associated Press in doubling the net receipts when reporting his September sale.

Recently a jovial reporter set the public at straining its eyesight by an article offering a prize to the first person who could find mint

marks or letters on a United States silver coin spelling the word "South." Many thousands of excellent spellers are still sputtering away with large prospects of "getting South"—by train only.

We must go slow in criticizing the newsmakers, however, as they probably mean well and in the long run do no harm to the science of Numismatics.

There is no American coin about which there is so much popular delusion as the "centless" V nickel of 1883. The writer, although at the time on the sunny side of ten, has a distinct recollection of talk about this coin during the year it was issued. It is absurd that it should take the population of our country nearly twenty-five years to get over such a delusion. The poor coin dealers hate to think of the annoyance in prospect for them in the next twenty-five years on account of the Columbus half dollar bugaboo. One of the smoothest bunco games ever palmed off on the people was the issuing by Uncle Sam of the Columbus half dollars at a dollar apiece. Even Abe Lincoln was wise in admitting that "All the people might be fooled a part of the time," and fooled they were into buying over 5,000,000 of these coins at \$1 each. Collectors regard Louisiana Purchase Exposition gold dollars at \$3 each an imposition, and even a Lewis and Clark Exposition gold dollar of 1904 at \$2 is unreasonable. A profit of fifty per cent. would be none too small, and had these dollars been issued at \$1.50, the sales would have at least tripled the number sold at \$2. And as to the quarters and half dollars of 1853, with arrows at date and rays on the reverse, the public bring them into the shops of the coin dealers by the hatful. These poor, deluded people have not their sense of the ridiculous bump developed to any extent, in their failure to realize that so great rarities as the arrowless and rayless quarters and half dollars of 1853 could not be picked up by the pocketful.

The interest of the public at large in coins centers in the prospect of their getting something for nothing, and only dealers with premium books to sell welcome such curiosity and inquiry. It is by no means complimentary to Numismatics.

### Coins Which are "Good Property."

People who are guessing as to what particular classes of coins will enhance in value in the near future, may depend upon it that ancient Greek silver and copper, United States cents and half cents, dated prior

to 1857, American silver dollars, excepting the common dates of standard dollars and private gold, if in choice condition, are good property.

The writer remembers that less than five years ago he paid in London \$2.50 for a Syracuse tetradrachm of splendid workmanship, a like specimen of which now costs from \$5 to \$8—an advance in price of at least one hundred per cent. Many other of the Greek pieces have taken similar jumps forward in price. In America collectors may look for an immediate advance in silver dollars, especially in proofs. Although several million silver dollars were coined in 1904, there will be a general scramble by the public for a dollar of this date when it becomes generally known that the year 1904 marks the discontinuance of this coinage. Proof dollars of 1904 have already reached auction records of over \$4.50 apiece.

Choice cents and half cents will appreciate in value, because almost every old garret and cellar the country over has been ferreted for old coins and postage stamps, and the prizes are practically all in the hands of collectors and dealers.

### A Comment on the Coins of the United States.

By CHARLES J. CONNICK.

On coins are stamped brief, accurate indexes to the vital qualities of nations; often they are artistic achievements as well: always their distinguishing features are most significant.

There have been many valuable papers written to attest the artistic and historic worth of ancient coins. It is a subject to enlist the enthusiasm of all who love things of character and beauty.

W. J. Stillman, the eminent connoisseur, once closed a sympathetic and discerning essay on Greek coins with these words:

“It will remain probably a dream that in our new republic, where in some respects the conditions of political existence so resemble those of old Greece, we shall employ our coinage as the Greeks did; though if we can not rival Kimon and Evainlos, we might at least from afar and, at our best, emulate Greek beauty. As it is even the coins of the least Central American States are examples to us; for, of all civilized nations, our mint mothers the most barbarous products.” Truly a humiliating conclusion!

And yet as a nation our interest in æsthetics is growing appreciably.

## 6 A Comment on the Coins of the U. S.

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Not all of our millionaires need to be guarded by a competent critic when roaming at large in search of pictures and objects of beauty for private collections. Our art galleries are frequented by intelligent people; our young men and women are studying painting and architecture and sculpture with gratifying results. From among our own ranks have come some of the mighty ones in the world of modern art; and yet it needs but a casual inspection of present day coins to convince us that Mr. Stillman's last statement is but too true.

We know that the shallowness and stupidity expressed in coins can not be lightly set aside as having no real importance. To one who would know the truth about a man or a nation the slightest and most casual expression be it ever so gross and stupid, is significant certainly; and the symbols a nation chooses to distinguish her coins may at once be assumed to be accurately expressive in every slightest feature.

So very much may be said—so very much has been persistently emphasized throughout the centuries by the coins of empires and republics and dependencies, that the most complaisant philistine can not but understand and appreciate the enthusiasm of the collector who gathers and treasures them. They tell of great achievements, they commemorate acts of patriotism, they suggest lofty national ideals, deep and true æsthetic impulses; they reach the placid heights, some of them, of a pure expression of beauty so comprehensive and so convincing as to declare as do the loftiest works of art, always, whatever their medium, that beauty, like goodness and truth, is immortal—that the three are a great eternal unity.

And so we turn to these coins of ours frankly to question them. What mean the distinguishing features thus given so prominent and so significant a national setting?

What means this vulgar and mean profile, with its coarse and badly-drawn features, that graces the obverse of our silver coins? Why this brutal nose and crude, flabby mouth, whose lines are those of cruelty and discontent? Why this low forehead and small, flat skull, which are so eloquent of the entire absence of brains? Why is this grotesque and ugly thing tolerated as the symbol of what is sublime and beautiful, and of great power in this country, where beauty and truth and goodness are so often given real consideration; where character, when all is said, is finally appreciated and extolled?

When we remember our many national weaknesses, and note them one by one, we may be saddened for the moment, but we are undismayed;



for we are a nation of hopeful optimists. We love pure light and free air, we reverence noble manhood's sanity and vigor, and true womanhood's lofty intelligence and beauty of character. All this is reflected more and more in our expressions in literature and art. Tho' we build paper mache arches, and strange and flimsy theaters and churches, we also erect Lincoln statues and Shaw monuments and Boston public libraries. Tho' we indulge in "hysterical" novels and in tawdry "pretty" things, we have always with us, producing an ever-widening circle of influence, many of the immortal achievements in literature and art.

And yet, staring at us persistently, early and late, intruding its sordid ugliness upon the poorest of us everywhere, is this reminder, not of our real achievements, our vital characteristics, our lofty ideals, but rather the symbol of our puerility, our grossness, our brutality, our low, crude æsthetic standards.

It would afford a grateful relief to any honest observer to note some redeeming features in the design, obverse or reverse, of some of our coins. The quest is hopeless. The eagle on the reverse of the silver coins—a whimsical, childish imitation of the forceful, characteristic conventionalized eagle of Germany—reminds one of the creation of a skillful pastry cook. On the five-cent piece the head lacks some of the brutality of the one on the silver coins, but that is only because it is more weak and silly.

However, for sheer inanity, the meaningless profile on the obverse of our one-cent piece is supreme. Not a line nor a modeled feature of it could possibly be construed as characteristic of the American Indian, yet it is confidently crowned with feathers as a child would naively use a label: "This is an Indian."

Contrast with this the bronze French coin, with its noble, intelligent head obverse, and the pleasantly designed reverse, or the beautifully modeled head of the girl queen Victoria on the Hong Kong penny issued some years ago, or the coin distinguished by the tenderly modeled head of the queen of the Netherlands, or the current English penny, or the penny of the late Boer Republic, or "the coins of the least of the Central American States," or any coin that may come into your possession. Verily, comparisons are odious!

But let us be fair. One feature may be urged for these coins of ours: they are designed to be stacked in piles, and can be readily handled in large quantities—a consideration which evidently did not trouble the

æsthetic Greeks, but the lack of which forced promptly into seclusion an admirable design by one of our distinguished artists. One can imagine the professional scorn of the mighty ones of a practical turn of mind, in noting that the great artist's dollars would not stand in piles!

Our dollars will stand in piles! And they may be rolled up into neat packages of twenty-five most attractively. A handsome appearance they make, too, when wrapped and sealed and labeled!

"The head," (on the obverse of our silver coins) the director of the mint gravely states, "is an ideal one." The design for half, quarter, and dime is the work of Charles E. Barber, engraver United States mint, and it can not be changed for twenty-five years except by special act of Congress. This is official. Hasten the special act of Congress!

Some of us were proud and hopeful when the handsome and distinguished Columbian half-dollar appeared. We thought, reasonably, it must be admitted, that the dignity and strength of it, and its national appropriateness, would soon force into obscurity the unsightly things of our present coinage.

We have been disappointed, but we are not hopeless. We know that the wholesome, vigorous good sense and loyalty to truth and simple goodness that is constantly asserting itself in our city governments and in our national assemblies, is sure to strike, soon or late, these minted misrepresentations; for to beat "graft" and "special privileges," and to follow them relentlessly, demands an unswerving loyalty to all that is true and sound. One day intelligent and discerning leaders shall awaken to the fact that our nation's coins are as misleading in their subtle misrepresentations as they are offensive in their ugliness, and then, with less desire to emulate Greek beauty than to stamp them simply and honestly with the symbols of fundamental "Americanisms" shall come coins worthy this alert, keen-eyed, productive nation of ours.

### The Collectors' Debt to the Museum.

Museum curators consider that the answering of numerous letters from collectors of archæological specimens is a part of their duties. Naturally, from his position, the curator has access to material both literary and scientific that is denied the average collector. And so long as the requests made by many correspondents are within the bounds of reason, the curator is glad to furnish such assistance as may be within

his power. However, I often wonder if the collector realizes that he is in any way indebted to the museum man.

One can best argue from one's own experience, and I trust that readers will pardon personal references. There are few curators who have a larger correspondence or acquaintance with collectors than have I. This is said in no boastful or bombastic spirit. It is simply a statement of fact. For twenty years I have spent a considerable portion of my time answering letters from collectors. A few of these men have presented collections to the various institutions with which I have been connected. Several hundred have purchased my books or our reports. Many of them have sent us duplicates or have exchanged material with us. But by far the greater majority have asked for information, advice, etc., all of which has been freely given.

It seems to me that if the man in charge of a museum gives his time and knowledge (without compensation) to the collector, that that person would be willing, in all justice, to do something for the museum. He could not be expected to present the institution with a large and valuable collection, but he certainly might have sent it a few of his duplicates. Therefore, since this journal will fall into the hands of some thousands of collectors, I make bold to suggest that the Department of Archæology of Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., is ready and willing to pass opinion upon specimens or collections provided that postage or express charges are prepaid. On our exchanges, we pay charges ourselves, but on specimens which are sent with request that they be returned, it is no more than right that the owners prepay charges. The department is also glad to have drawings or photographs of rare and interesting things, descriptions of sites and other archæologic information.

If the department is willing to take the trouble to investigate specimens—a work requiring as much trouble as the assay of ores—the owners should be equally willing to do something for us. So, I would like to remind collectors that there are in their cabinets a class of specimens which they, the collectors, usually care little about. These are not pretty, are usually rude and have no value. I refer to the unfinished tubes, ornaments, “ceremonials” and “banner stones.” The department is making a study of such forms and needs the rougher, unfinished ones in order to trace their manufacture from the crude block of slate or granite to the completed form. If collectors will only co-operate with us they will render science a service. The removal of two or three of

these unfinished and rough forms will not hurt collections in the slightest degree.

I have never been quite able to understand why collectors do not particularly care for material from some especially famous site. Yet it is a fact that the average collector will prefer an ordinary pipe to a selection from an exploration that proved the antiquity of man. I do not mean by this that collectors would be expected to fill their cabinets with materials from excavations to the exclusion of highly artistic objects. But they certainly ought to have in their cases *some* of the results of exploration of very primitive sites. As an illustration, consider Jacob's Cavern in the Ozark Mountains, near the edge of Arkansas, in southwestern Missouri, which was explored by us two years ago. We found the remains of man and numerous implements, pottery, etc., under a limestone floor (and under stalagmites) formed by the slow drop of water carrying lime, during an unknown period of time. The discovery was of the greatest importance. With a view of exchanging some of the material, we secured duplicates.

In the Delaware Valley Mr. Volk, a very patient and thorough worker, has dug in gravel terraces and among the ancient hearths for twenty years. Year after year he has sunk trench upon trench. There is no man in the United States who has done more to prove the antiquity of man than Mr. Volk. The specimens he found were sent to Cambridge and Chicago, and the duplicates given us. Now, these two sites are of the utmost importance to all intelligent persons, and I should think that collectors would be glad to have a few specimens from each in their cabinets.

There is yet another place, not so old, but much better known—Fort Ancient, in Ohio. It is the largest earth-work in the world. We made quite a collection from inside and outside of the walls. The place has been bought and preserved by the State of Ohio, and a book and several pamphlets have been published describing it.

Briefly, these places named are known throughout the scientific world. They have a direct bearing upon great questions—the age of man upon the American continent. I should think that any intelligent person would desire to possess a few of the specimens found in or near these sites. To be sure, the specimens are not very pretty, but their scientific value is in excess of any surface-found polished object now in the possession of a collector. And since illustrated reports on Jacob's

and Bushey Cavern go with the lots we send out, they are rendered intelligible even to beginners.

If a man—or a woman either, and there are many women who collect—confines his cabinets to the highly polished slate objects exclusively, collecting becomes a fad merely and is of no real value, aid or education to the person concerned. The department at Phillips desires to further serious study rather than idle and ignorant accumulations of objects that have no history. And to that end we are willing to send any person who is seriously interested our report of the exploration of Jacob's Cavern, and also a few objects from the front of the cave, a small Fort Ancient and a Delaware Valley (Volk) collection. We ask some of the unfinished objects previously mentioned in return. This is a liberal proposition and we trust that readers will take advantage of it.

W. K. MOOREHEAD,  
*Curator of the Museum, Andover, Mass.*

## Notables Who are Members of The British Numismatic Society

The Prince of Wales, the Princess of Wales, the Princess Christian, the Princess Henry of Battenburg, Leopold II, king of the Belgians; Christian IX, king of Denmark; the Crown Prince of Denmark; George, king of Greece; the Prince Royal of Greece; Victor Emanuel, king of Italy; the Queen of Italy; Carlos, king of Portugal; the Queen of Portugal; Alfonso XIII, king of Spain; Christina, queen of Spain; Field Marshal Earl Roberts; Joseph Choate, late American Ambassador to Great Britain; the Countess of Yarborough, Marquis De Soveral, Count De Lalaing, Count Albert Mensdorf, Count Paul Wolff, Viscount Tadasu Hayashi, Baron Gericke Van Herwinjen, Count Beckendorff, Baron Bildt, the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Grantley, Sir Richard Nicholson, the Earl of Powis, Sir James Thomson, Sir Alfred Scott-Gatty, General (Sir) Charles Warren.

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In a recent bright article on Coins and Medals, *The New York Herald* admits that "Numismatics is a branch of art." The *Herald*, we are glad to mention, has always given generous space to things Numismatic.

### The Chicago Numismatic Society.

The twenty-fourth regular meeting of the above Society was held in their rooms, 1123 Masonic Temple, Friday evening, January 5th, 1906, President W. F. Dunham presiding.

A communication was received from Lyman H. Low, who presented the Society with some statements regarding the poor Confederate half dollars, which the Secretary was instructed to acknowledge.

Chas. Blumenschein, Eswald Pettet, Clayton C. Herr, Capt. Emile Dietrich, Thos. L. Elder, J. B. Holmes, Edward T. Newell, J. M. Henderson, C. C. Northern, and W. E. Pearse were elected to membership.

The President appointed V. M. Brand, M. P. Carey, and H. C. Whitehill a committee on revision of the constitution and by-laws, and instructed them to report at next meeting.

The following officers, having been duly elected at the December meeting, were then installed:

President, G. W. Tracy; Vice-President, E. C. Verkler; Secretary, Ben G. Green; Treasurer, F. Elmo Simpson; Librarian and Curator, Virgil M. Brand; Censor, W. F. Dunham; Executive Committee, Dunham, Brand and Green.

The President appointed Messrs. Green, Brand and Dunham a committee to audit the books of the Treasurer.

Under exhibitions, Mr. Pearse showed a gold mohur of India, Mr. Dunham a fine ancient aes, Mr. Brand some double and triple thalers, and Mr. Green his collection of United States freak coinage. Those present were supplied with sets of the nickel coinage of Jamaica for 1905, and one set was placed in the cabinet.

Books received since last meeting were: *Histoire Monetaire de Geneve*, by Demole; *Nineteenth Century Tokens*, by W. J. Davis; and *Histoire Numismatique Belge*, by Guioth. Spink's Numismatic Circular, *The Numismatist*, Arnold's Numismatic Guide and catalogues of sales of Low and Green were also received.

The Secretary reported a total of fifty members, of which twenty-six were elected in 1905.

Adjourned to meet Friday evening, February 2d, 1906.

BEN G. GREEN, *Secretary.*

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## One Hundred Dollars Worth of Prizes.

In order to stimulate the interest of the younger generation in the various branches of collecting, the editor begs to offer the following prizes:

*For the best article on ancient Greek coins*, a collection of ancient Greek silver and bronze coins valued at \$20. For the second best article a \$5 lot.

*For the best article on modern foreign copper coins*, a collection of foreign copper and nickel coins valued at \$20. For the next best article a \$10 collection.

*For the best article on American Colonial coins*, a collection of United States and Colonial copper coins valued at \$20. For the second best article a \$5 collection.

*For the best article on American Archaeology*, an archaeological collection valued at \$20. For the second best article a \$5 collection.

*For the best article on Gem stones, either cut or in the rough*, a cut gem collection valued at \$20. For the second best article a \$5 collection.

*For the best article on stamp collecting*, a collection of stamps worth \$20. For second best article a \$5 collection.

### RULES GOVERNING THE CONTEST.

The contributors must be under 25 years of age.

Articles must not exceed 1,600 words in length.

In the mineralogical contest, the articles may deal with either precious or semi-precious stones.

The manuscripts must be plainly written and must be in the hands of the editor before April 1st, 1906.

The names of the winners of the first and second prizes will be announced and the articles of the winners of the first prizes will be published in the MONTHLY.

Any person, whether a subscriber or not, may enter the contest.

The following gentlemen have agreed to act as judges with the editor in deciding the contest:

Numismatics.—A. R. Frey, Esq., President of the American Numismatic Association, 673 Green Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.

## 14      One Hundred Dollars Worth of Prizes

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Mineralogy.—Walter F. Webb, Esq., 202 Westminister Road, Rochester, N. Y.

Archæology.—Prof. Warren K. Moorehead, Curator of the Museum, Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass.

Philately.—H. E. Deats, Esq., Ex-President of the American Philatelic Association, Flemington, N. J.

### The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal

This Society was founded in 1862, with headquarters at the Chateau de Ramezay, the most interesting public building in Canada, and the residence of the governors of Montreal under the French regime. The Chateau was built by its best and most popular governor, Claude de Ramezay, and contains the numismatic collection, the national portrait gallery and a library of over 20,000 volumes and pamphlets.

A meeting of the Society was held at this famous old Chateau on January 16th, last, with Vice-President Judge Sicotte in the chair.

The minutes of the previous meeting and those of the Council were read and approved.

The Committee in the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the building of the Chateau reported progress.

The Curator reported donations as per donation book numbers 2662 to 2670.

Mr. Rudolph Forget having contributed \$100, was elected a life member.

Mr. R. W. McLachlan exhibited 166 Canadian coins and medals, added to his collection during 1905, including a very rare Louis XV Indian medal, picked up in Boston. Mr. McLachlan read a paper on Franklin and the Chateau de Ramezay, of both of which this year is the bi-centennial, which led to a very interesting discussion among several members present.

Through the generosity of the President, Hon. Justice Baby, and Vice-President W. D. Lighthall, four fine old oil portraits were added to the national portrait gallery, including Marquis de Lobtiniere, Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor general of New France, from 1703 to 1725; Marquis de Vaudreuil, the last governor general of New France, 1760; Count de Vaudreuil, the last governor of Montreal, 1760. The latter three governors were Canadian born.



# Stamp Department

PROF. C. ABBOTT DAVIS, SUPT.

*Curator Roger Williams Museum, Providence, R. I.*

Stamp collecting has as many styles or new phases as costume. Every year sees a new hat or coat adopted, worn for awhile, then replaced by another. Just at present the stamp collectors are hunting for king's heads or are filling in blank spaces of English or American colonies.

Current events are apt to change a series, so Norway, Hayti, Turkey and Russia come in for their share of attention.

For some reason envelopes and cut squares are side-tracked, while revenue, telegraph, railway, and express stamps are in great demand. Perhaps this is partly due to the talk in the papers about municipal ownership, and the study of conditions in foreign countries where the state operates the telegraph, railways, and express business.

Again, our Postoffice Department is bitterly criticizing the other Departments for their abuse of the franking privilege, which causes one writer to assume that there will be entire re-issue of the popular department stamps. This announcement was immediately hailed with delight by the boys of today, who never had the joy of peeling off five 7-cent Treasury's from one envelope (as I did in 1875) and selling four of them for the enormous sum of five cents each. Seriously, the stamp business was never on as secure a foundation as today. Frauds are being run down, and although the public do not bite at "Seebecks" as they once did, yet there is good profit, provided the dealer "has the goods." Large dealers are putting in United States and foreign revenues. Why? Because there is a demand for them. A club formed entirely of revenue collectors, is called the Metropolitan Fiscal Association. By means of its Exchange Department (which now contains over 5,000 revenues) any beginner may, at small expense, get a collection of 500 varieties in a surprisingly small time. The Sales Department has six foreign, as well as several local dealers, to back it, and offers the best sheets possible at surprisingly low net prices.

With the exception of the United States, the prices of revenues are about one-third that of similar postage, simply because the demand

is below the supply, but these conditions are bound to change, and a word to the wise is sufficient.

It is simply impossible to lose money on Canadian law, king's head revenues, Philippine revenues (U. S. issue), even in big lots.

One of the Metropolitan Fiscal Association members has a private collection of 20,000 varieties, and the average is nearly 10,000 varieties. Argentine alone has issued over 1,500 revenues, and is a good field for the specialist.

It is said that the United States has issued an entirely new revenue series for 1906 in the Philippines, hence the sudden tremendous jump in the prices of the other issues.

A publication has been started down in Saco, Maine, devoted wholly to revenue collecting.

### Mineralogy.

Written for the MONTHLY by Forest Gaines, Head of Mineralogy  
Department American Society of C. C.

In this short article I shall endeavor to give a synopsis of the valuable training which may be had from a systematic study of mineralogy. The study of this science is especially valuable to the young, as it helps to form greater powers of perception and study. These reasons alone are enough to recommend the study to all, aside from its ultimate scientific training. "Mineralogy," as the term is now understood, refers to the inorganic substances, composing the solid crust of the earth. Every known mineral species has a fairly definite chemical composition.

Take, for example, the most common mineral, quartz, which is composed chemically of silicon dioxide, the latter being usually expressed by the formula,  $\text{Si O}_2$ . There are now known, about one thousand distinct mineral species.

According to their chemical composition, minerals are divided into various groups, as the hydrocarbons, oxides, sulphides, etc. Some collectors prefer to specialize in one of these groups, but the majority are general collectors.

Every collector should have some kind of cabinet in which to display his various specimens. Some prefer glass cases, in which the specimens are all neatly laid, while others have upright cabinets in which are many drawers, each of the latter being divided into many small compartments for the reception of the various specimens.

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Under favorable conditions, nearly all mineral species will crystallize into certain definite geometrical forms. The writer has seen many collections, which were wholly given over to the various forms of crystals. With their many brilliant colorings, these crystal collections usually form a very beautiful sight. It is my intention to give most of my time in the future to the collection of crystals.

Probably the most enjoyment to be had from mineral collecting comes from getting out and finding the specimens yourself. This always makes a certain interest accrue, which would not otherwise be the case. Also it is conducive to habits of good health and inspiration. A greater part of my very large collection has been made personally. Of course, however, the rarer specimens must of necessity be acquired by purchase or exchange.

I will be pleased to give any assistance in my power to any of our young mineralogists who care to address me. If there is information concerning any certain species which you would like to have, address me at Glendive, Mont., and I will be pleased to give you an early reply. The dissemination of universal knowledge should certainly be the chief object of any collector's fraternity.

In conclusion, I wish to commend Bro. Elder for his enterprise in launching a new journal. May it prove a valuable means of bringing others into the fold. In the near future I hope to see some very good articles in print from the pens of some of our younger collectors. There is room for all, and every newcomer will certainly be gladly welcomed. Let the good work go on without interruption, is my earnest wish.

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